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Turning west off busy, commercial North Broadway, a traveler suddenly enters into an enclave of village parish life. Picturesquely nestled into four hilly acres of former nineteenth century woodland, the red brick Gothic church, rectory and school of Holy Cross Parish form an impressive set-piece of romantic landscape imagery. (See Photos 1 and 2) The slender silhouette of the 185 foot church tower soars above modest brick homes and remains a symbol of a German community established in Baden over a century and a quarter ago.

The church was completed in 1909 at a cost of \$47,000, excluding interior decoration. While the design of the church cannot be attributed with any certainly to a single individual, documentation indicates the collaboration of the parish rector, Rev. Peter Wigger, an architectural firm, Rudell and Odenthal of Cologne, Germany, and St. Louis architect/sculptor, Joseph Conradi. According to Monsignor Martin B. Hellriegel, credit for the design belongs to Rev. Wigger who submitted a "rough sketch" to the Cologne architects to develop. However, included in the published list of churches designed by Carl Rudell is one in St. Louis, Missouri. Finally, St. Louis building permit files record Joseph Conradi as architect of the church contradicting Rev. Wigger's claim that Conradi was hired only to enlarge the German plans. The earliest plan and elevations from Rudell and Odenthal (dated 1903) were modified in the firm's 1906 drawings; the latter were enlarged and further modified in Conradi's plans. Technical notations and emendations signed by Rev. Wigger exist on both the 1906 plans from Cologne and on those of Conradi, indicating the priest's directive role in the final form of the building.

The sequence of modifications moved toward simplications of detail and consolidation of forms so that the church's strong simple masses were clearly revealed. The drawing by Rudell and Odenthal in Photo #3 is substantially the church as built; it measures 148 feet long on the exterior with a nave fifty four-feet wide and transept of sixty-five feet. Vigorous brick buttresses trimmed with white limestone offsets strengthen the four bay nave, the apse and corners of the transept and tower. The nave and side aisles are roofed as one and carry small copper crocketed dormers, also found on the apse roof. Carved angels' heads embellish the gables of the flanking doorways on the facade while a head of Christ is framed by the gable of the central doorway. German Gothic models are recalled by the imposing square gabled tower surmounted by an octagonal spire. The placement of the tower forward from the nave is a distinctive feature which contributes monumental power to the design while increasing interior space and light. By locating the organ in the tower, a smaller choir loft could be installed leaving the aisles free and well illuminated.

The austere beauty of the exterior is also expressed in the uncluttered interior hall-church plan which integrates the nave and aisles into a graceful, simple whole. (See Photo #4) In addition to the hall-plan and tri-lobal apse greatly admired by Rev. Wigger, 6 the use of an elevated sanctuary with ambos for the Gospel and Epistle suggests German prototypes. 7 The generous width and height of the windows

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permit ample light and an unusually fine display of vividly colored glass designed by the St. Louis studio of Emil Frei, but manufactured at Frei's studio in Munich, Germany. The nave windows illustrate scenes from Christ's life while apse windows honor Louis IX of France (St. Louis) along with other religious figures; each window is inscribed with the name of a parish donor.

A comparison of Photo #5, showing the interior of the church in 1914, with its appearance today in Photo #4 reveals few alterations. The original wooden high altar (transferred from the first church) was replaced by a new white Italian marble altar (Photo #6) designed by Rev. Peter Wigger and executed by St. Louis marble company, T.G. Schrader Sons. 10 The new altarpiece features a Crucifixion group at the summit and a relief panel based on Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper below on the Mensa. The Gothic reredos contains relief panels depicting the "Baptism of Christ" and "Christ in Gethsemane" on the Gospel side with "Christ Risen from the Tomb" above the "Flight to Egypt" on the northern Epistle side.

Among Monsignor Hellriegel's contributions to Holy Cross is the reconstruction of the original side altars dedicated to St. Joseph and the Blessed Mother. The lindenwood statues of St. Joseph and the Virgin and Child were carved in 1878 by the well-known St. Louis sculptor, Max Schneiderhahn. Executed in 1943 by St. Louis artist Gottfied Schiller; the new Blessed Mother altar (Photo #7) illustrates Monsignor's twofold concern for preserving the integrity of the original altar and expressing the objectives of his liturgical renewal through the iconographic program of the new wings. The unusual format of a double set of wings allows a full development of the Marian theme. On the wings shown open in Photo 7 are scenes from the lives of the patron saints of the first six pastors of Holy Cross (1864-1976). The set of wings behind these combine traditional images of the Virgin with scenes of contemporary family life illustrating the presence of the spirit of Mary.

Still the showpiece of residential Baden, the two and one half story red brick rectory was built in two stages. Photo #8 records the house as it was originally built in 1882 at the cost of \$3,050.13 It features High Victorian polychrome detailing in the limestone trimmed gable, lintels and keystones and ornamental terra cotta blocks that band the eave line. Intaglio designs trim the pointed arch wooden window panels. In 1927,14 the house was transformed from a side-hall to a central-hall plan with the addition of another half. (Photo #2.) Extreme care was taken to match the brick and detailing of the earlier part,

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so that with the exception of the new porch, the house appears to be a single unit. At this time, the house was joined to the church sacristy by a passageway.

The new school building, completed in 1930 at a cost of \$65,000¹⁵ was designed by the St. Louis firm, Jackson and Peck, Architects and Engineers. A drawing for the school, signed Jackson and Peck, shows the building in a Collegiate Gothic mode with conventional historic detailing. This design was abandoned for the simpler rectilinear lines and geometric ornament found in the school today. (Photo #1) To what extend the executed design resulted from considerations of cost or preference cannot be conclusively determined, although Rev. Anton Wigger's comments indicate that the chosen style was one he admired and understood. (See Section 8.) In any event, the restrained, streamlined forms of the school skillfully echo the church without competing or overpowering. Efforts to relate the school to the church can be seen in the use of red brick and limestone trim, and in the vertical stress achieved by brick pilasters and buttresses. The large pointed-arch panel above the principal entrance is inscribed with stylized (perhaps symbolic) designs which are repeated at the side entrance.

Although constricted by limited means, the quality of buildings at Holy Cross attest to the parish's solidarlity and dedicated leadership. The architecture remains today a center of attraction for the neighborhood and a source of civic pride for North St. Louis.

FOOTNOTES

¹The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish (St. Louis: Holy Cross Parish, 1964), p. 23.

²Monsignor Martin B. Hellriegel, interview, Holy Cross Parish, St. Louis, Missouri, July, 1979.

³Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, <u>Allgemeines Lexicon Der Bildenen Kunstler</u>, 36 vols. (Leipzig, Germany: E. A. Seemann, 1907-1935), vol. 29. Carl Rudell, architect and watercolorist, was born in 1855 in Trier, Germany. He is credited with designing approximately eighty churches (all in Germany except one in St. Louis) and has watercolors in German museum collections.

⁴A native of Berne, Switzerland, Joseph Conradi (1864-1936) came to St. Louis in 1886. After working as a marble sculptor for Conradi and Schrader

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several years, he established his own architectural firm, advertising a specialty in church architecture. His St. Louis work includes altarpieces in St. Liborius and St. Alphonsus; church designs for Most Holy Trinity (1898), St. Matthew (1906) and St. Liborius convent (1905). Around 1920 he moved to Los Angeles where he died. "Joseph Conradi, 72, Architect for Catholic Churches Here, Dies," Unidentified newspaper, 18 November 1936. Missouri Historical Society, Scrapbook Vol. 18, p. 133.

 5 Wigger's notation on the Conradi plans explicitly states that Conradi was paid only to enlarge the Cologne plans from a scale of 1/8 inch. to 1/4 inch.

⁶Goldenes Jubilaum der Hl. Kreuz Gemeinde zu Baden (St. Louis: Holy Cross Parish, 1914), p. 49.

⁷Monsignor Martin B. Hellriegel, interivew, Holy Cross Parish, St. Louis, Missouri, July, 1979.

⁸Born in Munich, Germany, Emil Frei studied at the School of Arts and Crafts, Munich, before coming to San Francisco where he trained with a church decorator. He arrived in St. Louis in the 1880's and established a stained glass studio that is operated today by his grandson, Robert Frei. Among his numerous commissions in St. Louis are windows in St. Liborius and St. Anthony churches. His son, Emil, Jr. was cited in <u>Time</u> magazine, 14 April 1967, as one of the foremost U.S. artists in stained glass. Robert Frei, interview, St. Louis, Missouri, November, 1979.

⁹Monsignor Hellriegel, interview, Holy Cross Parish, St. Louis, Missouri, July, 1979.

Rev. Peter Wigger and Rev. Anthony Wigger, <u>History of Holy Cross Parish</u> (St. Louis: Holy Cross Parish, 1936), p. 31.

11 The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish (St. Louis: Holy Cross Parish, 1964), p. 37.

Before emigrating to the United States in 1870, Maximilian Schneiderhahn (1844-1923) was graduated with highest honors from the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, and exhibited at the 1869 International Art Exposition at Munich. A leading sculptor of religious art, his work is represented in numerous St. Louis

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churches including St. Joseph, St. Mary of Victories, St. Liborius, St. Vincent and churches in Milwaukee and San Francisco. Emil Schneiderhan, <u>Family History</u> Schneiderhan (Weilheim/Barvaria, Germany: 1976), pp. 132-33.

- 12 The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish, p. 37.
- 13 Wigger and Wigger, p. 12.
- ¹⁴The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish, p. 25.
- ¹⁵Wigger and Wigger, p. 27.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Holy Cross Parish is significant both for its architecture and history. The rectory, church and school (spanning a building period from 1882 to 1930) are finely-executed examples of three phases of the Gothic Revival style. (See Section 7.) Since the establishment of a church in immigrant communities was an indicator of permanent settlement and an important vehicle of social organization, the construction of the first church of Holy Cross in 1864 was a significant stimulant to settlement in the area. Located on the principal road between St. Louis and Fort Bellefontaine, Baden originated as a small trading post; it was not until the great wave of Irish and German immigration in the 1850's that a stable community, first called Germantown, emerged. Following the withdrawal of the Irish in 1872, Holy Cross Parish became a German national church, which influenced the design of the new church in 1909. Later in the twentieth century the parish gained international recognition as a pioneering center for liturgical reform under the distinguished leadership of Monsignor Martin B. Hellriegel.

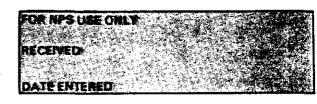
Before the new parish was founded, Roman Catholics were forced to travel some three miles over unimproved roads to worship at Holy Trinity in Bremen (a near northside German community--See Figure #1), or crowd into a small room of Archbishop Kenrich's former summer house in nearby Calvary Cemetery where an old French priest, Father Saulnier, read Mass. In 1860, one of the organizers of Holy Cross parish, Frederick Kraft, submitted the name Baden for the first Post Office in memory of the birthplace of many of the settlers. (Kraft himself had come to the area in 1852 from Baden, Germany, and operated a saloon and store called the Six-Mile House because of its distance from the city of St. Louis.) The first church was a small brick Gothic building constructed entirely by the parishioners; it was followed by a modest brick rectory and a frame schoolhouse in 1866.4

Despite the mixed ethnic composition of the parish (seventeen Irish; fifteen German and three French families in 1865)⁵ the German presence was strongly felt from the start. In fact the founder of Holy Cross, Rev. Caspar Doebbener (pastor of Holy Trinity at the time) was the first in a succession of German-born rectors that was uninterrupted until the retirement of Monsignor Hellriegel in 1976. The coexistence of German and Irish parishioners at best was unstable and often deteriorated into open conflict. Tension growing out of divergent cultural backgrounds and language was further aggravated by dominance of the American Church hierarchy by Irish-Americans. When eighty Irish families withdrew from Holy Cross in 1872 to form their own church (Our Lady of Mount Carmel) only a

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block away, the parish was left nearly bankrupt. Most of the remaining forty German families were poor Taborers (many working in the cemeteries), unable to liquidate the \$9,000 debt of the new parish school completed shortly before the secession of the Irish. (Fortunately, the building was soon sold and served as the Public School of Baden until 1909, and then, ironically, as the Irish Parochial School until 1936.) In 1874, Holy Cross constructed a smaller school at the cost of \$1,800, which was also used as a convent for the Franciscan Sisters from Oldenburg, Indiana, who had come in 1869 to teach at Holy Cross.

Although expansion of the parish was blocked by geographic obstacles—two extensive cemeteries and a park to the southwest and the Mississippi bottom lands immediately to the east—the parish thrived within these boundaries, achieving a remarkable solidarity also fostered by seventy—five years of strong leadership by a single family of German priests from Westphalia. The Wigger dynasty (an uncle succeeded by two nephews) was established at Holy Cross with the appointment in 1865 of Herman Wigger (1839–1897); under his pastorate the parish was restored to solvency (following the Irish debacle) and a new rectory was built. It was, however, the zeal and exceptional talents of his nephew and successor, Peter (1857–1925), which guided Holy Cross into an era of new confidence and prestige evidenced by the construction of a new church in 1909.

Peter was brought to St. Louis in 1869 by another priest-uncle. Peter Wigger senior, who was escaping repressive measures of Bismarck's Prussia. Young Peter's rigorous classical education, plus study later at the university at Innsbruck, Austria, 10 provided him with knowledge of the arts unusual for a parish priest. These skills were given expression by his active participation in designing the new church and high altar of Holy Cross. (See Section 7.) In 1904, Father Peter entered a model of the church in the Louisiana Purchase Exposition under the category of architectural engineering; 11 his prize of \$1,000 was contributed to the building fund. 12

In 1907, the old church was torn down and a temporary one erected for use while the new church was under construction. The laying of the cornerstone on May 23, 1908, was occasion for a great celebration attended by over four thousand persons representing city-wide parishes. 13 Even more festivity was witnessed and reported by the press when the church was dedicated by Archbishop Glennon on May 23, 1909. The High Mass that followed was officiated by priests all born in the parish or at some time residents of it. 14

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Considered the "great power" at Holy Cross, ¹⁵ Peter left at his death in 1925 a small but strong German parish, the spirit of which is captured in his words:

Succeeding generations shall know who built this church. We did not solicit or beg from anyone outside our own parish. We are too proud. We are no beggars. We are Germans. 16

The rural village ambiance of the parish only began to change significantly after Father Peter's younger half-brother, Anton Wigger (1873-1940), was appointed rector in 1925. By January, 1926, the church census showed a leap from one hundred fifty to two hundred fifty families, the result of intensive real estate development of land formerly used for truck farming. The increase in parishioners necessitated an assistant priest, and subsequently an addition to the rectory. 17 The new school built in 1930 to accommodate the expanding parish was a project of Rev. Anton, who described it as:

...built in accordance with the high ideals laid down by Ruskin... a strikingly different building, being designed in modernistic Gothic...an ornamentation that approaches the ideal of the great "Beuron School of Art."

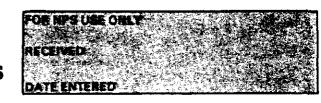
When Monsignor Martin B. Hellriegel (1890-) assumed rectorship of Holy Cross in 1940 there were sufficient numbers of Germans among the four hundred forty parish families to justify an occasional Mass in German. Upon his appointment Archbishop Glennon had told him, "You will find there a good soil for your liturgical efforts." Already known throughout the world for his leadership in liturgical renewal, Monsignor Hellriegel achieved at Holy Cross what no one before him had accomplished in this country--successful application of the liturgical apostolate at the parish level. Because of this work (well in advance of the Vatican II reform), Holy Cross became an international model attracting thousands of visitors over the years, many of them prominent figures in the movement from Europe and the United States. Official church recognition of his endeavors was conferred when he was appointed a Domestic Prelate in 1949, followed by an honor rarely bestowed on American prelates, a Protonotary Apostolic, in 1964. 20

Born in Heppenheim, Germany, Monsignor was brought to Starkenburg, Missouri, in 1906 by Father Hoelm, an old family friend who had recruited several boys from Heppenheim for priesthood in America.²¹ After study at St. Meinrad's

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Seminary, Indiana, he entered Kenrick Seminary, St. Louis, in 1910; he was ordained on December 14, 1914, by Archbishop Glennon²² (later a supporter of his liturgical efforts).

Before coming to Holy Cross Monsignor served twenty-two years as Chaplain to the Sisters of the Precious Blood at O'Fallon, Missouri, where he introduced liturgical practices which were viewed with suspicion and sharply criticized in the St. Louis diocese. Nonetheless, his accomplishments were legion during the O'Fallon years. Along with Dom Virgil Michel of St. John's Abbey, College-ville, Minnesota, and Gerald Ellard, S.J., he was one of the triumvirate that organized the liturgical movement in the United States. Their meeting in 1925 resulted in the founding of Orate Frates (now called Worship), the literary mouthpiece of the American liturgical movement. Monsignor's influence was exerted nationally through numerous articles, booklets, lectures and leadership at the first National Liturgical Day in 1929 and the annual Liturgical Weeks that followed. His conviction that liturgical renewal was allied to social concerns was manifested in his support of the Catholic Worker Movement and minority groups. 25

Valuable background for his liturgical work at Holy Cross was provided by years of study of the Scriptures and publications of German theologians; his contact with liturgical leaders at the Abbey of Maria Laach, Germany, in 1922, and with the noted Austrian liturgist, Dr. Pius Parsch, was particularly influencial. Monsignor's parallel achievements in popularizing the liturgical movement were acknowledged when he was greeted in Europe as "the American Pius Parsch" by liturgical scholar, J. A. Jungmann.

Fruits of his study of Christian art (augmented by visits to European centers for liturgical art at Beuron and Maria Laach) can be found at Holy Cross as well as in the O'Fallon chapel and Kansas City Seminary. In designing Holy Cross' new altars for the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph (See Section 7), Monsignor incorporated nineteenth century statues from the first church saying, "I wanted to preserve tradition and carry the old over." Retired since 1976, Monsignor (now 89) is still a guiding spirit and contributor to services at Holy Cross. The working-class congregation of six hundred fifty families is today a mosaic of ethnic origins including a few of the old German families; one hundred sixty students (a mixture of faiths and races) attend the school.

Monsignor Hellriegel's respect for the value of the past as a foundation for the future was highlighted by recent comments on historic preservation in St. Louis. Speaking of the lost sheep who show no interest in anything historical

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he affirmed, "they will come back again" and praised Landmarks Association of St. Louis saying, "Work like yours can stimulate people and be a boon to the neighborhood." With his characteristic strong spirit he concluded, "Let's leave the lamentations to the prophet Jeremiah and do something." 29

FOOTNOTES

 1 Norbury L. Wayman, "History of the Baden-Riverview area" (Typed manuscript, n.d.)

²The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish (St. Louis: Holy Cross Parish, 1964), pp. 9-11.

³Wayman.

⁴Diamond Jubilee of Holy Cross Parish (St. Louis: Holy Cross Parish, 1939), p. 17 and p. 21.

⁵Ibid., p. 19.

⁶The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish, pp. 15-16.

⁷Diamond Jubilee of Holy Cross Parish, p. 22.

⁸Rev. Peter Wigger and Rev. Anthony Wigger, <u>History of Holy Cross Parish</u> (St. Louis: Holy Cross Parish, 1936), p. 12.

⁹The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish, p. 20.

¹⁰Wigger and Wigger, p. 25.

11 Official Catalogue of Exhibitors (St. Louis: The Official Catalogue Co., 1904), Entry #288, p. 26. Father Wigger's model survives and is on display in the Parish Hall.

¹²St. Louis Republic, 24 May 1909.

¹³The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish, pp. 21-22.

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 15 Interview with Monsignor Martin B. Hellriegel, Holy Cross Church, St. Louis, Missouri, July, 1979.

¹⁶Wigger and Wigger, pp. 19-20.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁸Ibid, p 28. Rev. Anton's allusion to the Beuron School and the "Benedictine Architect P. Desiderius Lenz," suggests knowledge and perhaps influence of the liturgical art renewal movement.

 20 Interview with Monsignor Martin B. Hellriegel, Holy Cross Church, St. Louis, Missouri, July, 1979.

²³Noel Hackmann Barrett, "The Contribution of Martin B. Hellriegel to the American Catholic Movement" (Ph.D. dissertation, St. Louis University, 1976), p. 119.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 283-87 and Chapter 11.

²⁵Ibid., p. 178.

²⁶The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish, p. 33.

²⁸Interview with Monsignor Martin B. Hellriegel, Holy Cross Church, St. Louis, Missouri, July, 1979.

²⁹Ibid.

¹⁴St. Louis Republic, 24 May 1909.

¹⁹The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish, p. 23.

²¹The Centennial of Holy Cross Parish, pp. 30-31.

²²Ibid., pp. 31-32.

²⁷Barrett, p. 86.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached.

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STATE	CODE.	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
ORGANIZATION	Research Associate ation of St. Louis, Inc.	11/7/79 DATE (314) 421-647 TELEPHON	
Landmarks Associ	ation of St. Louis, Inc.	(314) 421-647	
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		OFFICER CERTIFICATION OF THE STATE IS	
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hereby nominate this prop		ional Historic Preservation Act of 1960 gister and certify that it has been eva	
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HOLY CROSS PARISH DISTRICT

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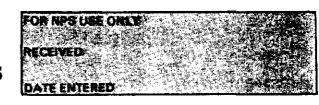
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HOLY CROSS PARISH DISTRICT

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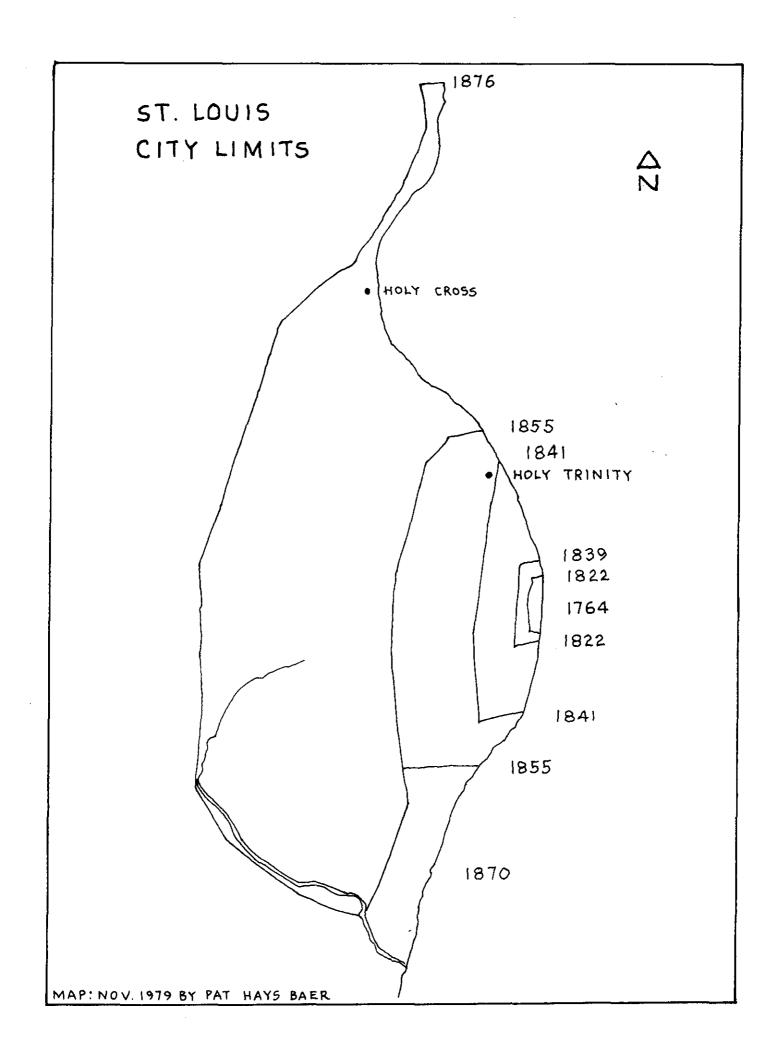
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Figure #1 St. Louis City Limits

Pat Hays Baer, Draftsman November, 1979



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Figure #2 Site Plan, Holy Cross Parish

Pat Hays Baer, Draftsman November, 1979

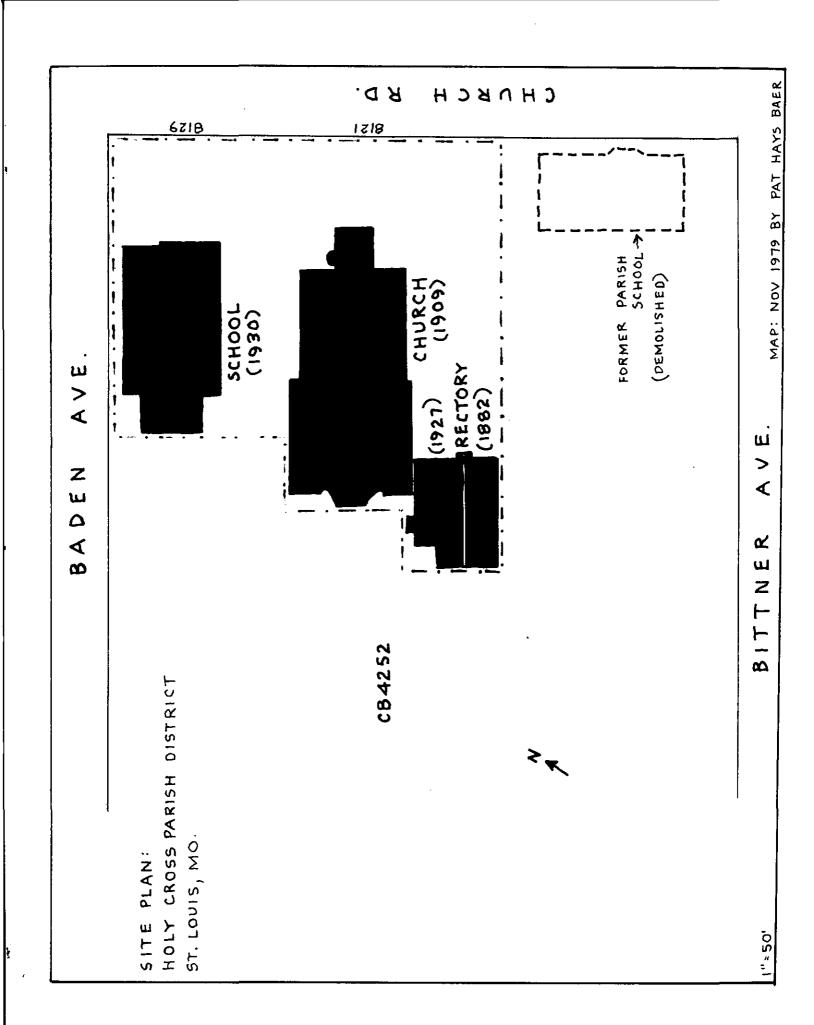


Photo #1 Eastern (principal) elevations of church and school. Photographer: Jill R. Johnson Date: October, 1979 Negative: Landmarks Assocation

Camera facing southwest.



Photo #2 Eastern (principal) elevation of rectory and southern transept of church.
Photographer: Jill R. Johnson Date: October, 1979
Negative: Landmarks Association Camera facing northwest.

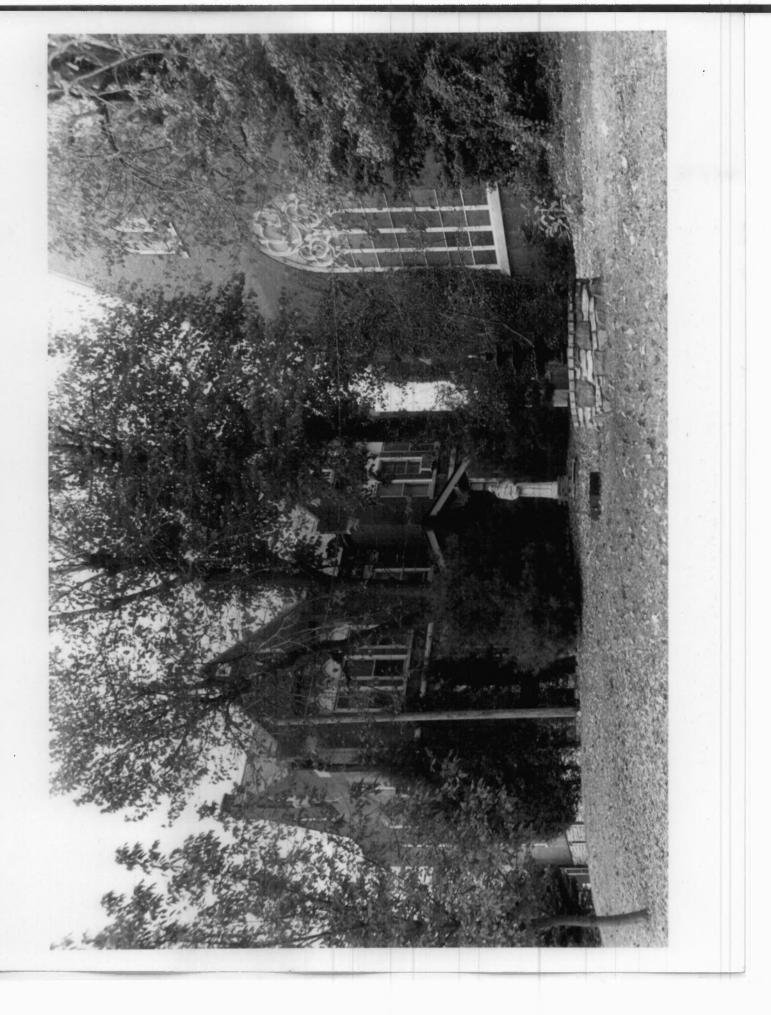
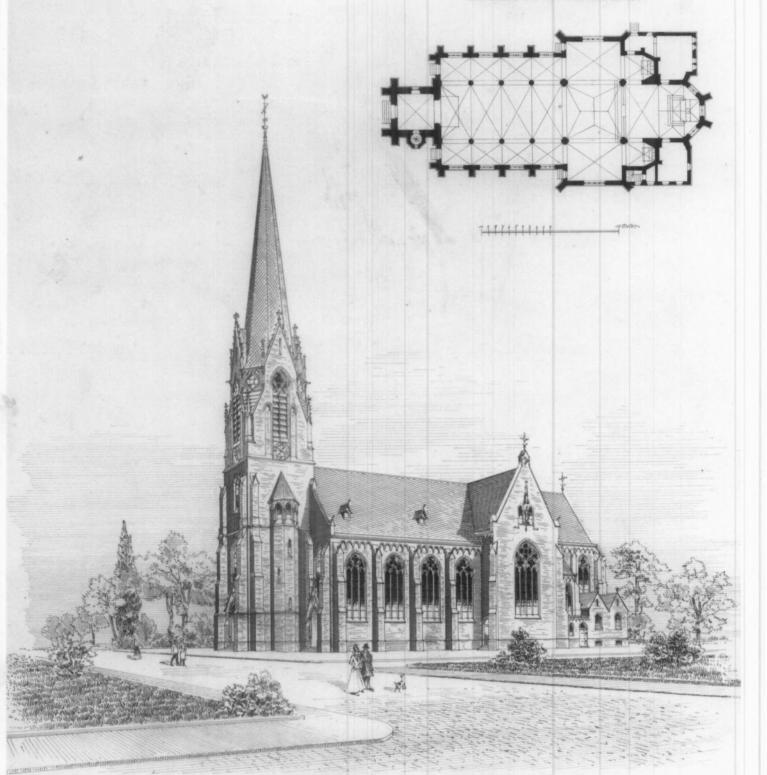


Photo #3 Original drawing of Holy Cross Church, northern elevation. c. 1906 Part of Holy Cross Parish archives. Photocopy: Silver Image, 1979 Negative: Landmarks Association

Grundriss der hl. Kreuzkirche.



Neue kath. Kirche in Baden-St. Louis.

Entworfen von Rüdellu. Odenthal, Architecten in Köln.

Photo #4 Interior of Holy Cross Church, view looking west toward main altar in apse.

Photographer: Jill R. Johnson
Date: October, 1979
Negative: Landmarks Association



HOLY CROSS PARISH CHURCH St. Louis, Missouri

Interior of Holy Cross Church, view looking west toward main altar in apse. C. 1914
From: Goldenes Jubilaum der hl. Kreuz Gemeinde zu Baden (1914)
Photocopy: Silver Image, 1979
Negative: Landmarks Association Photo #5

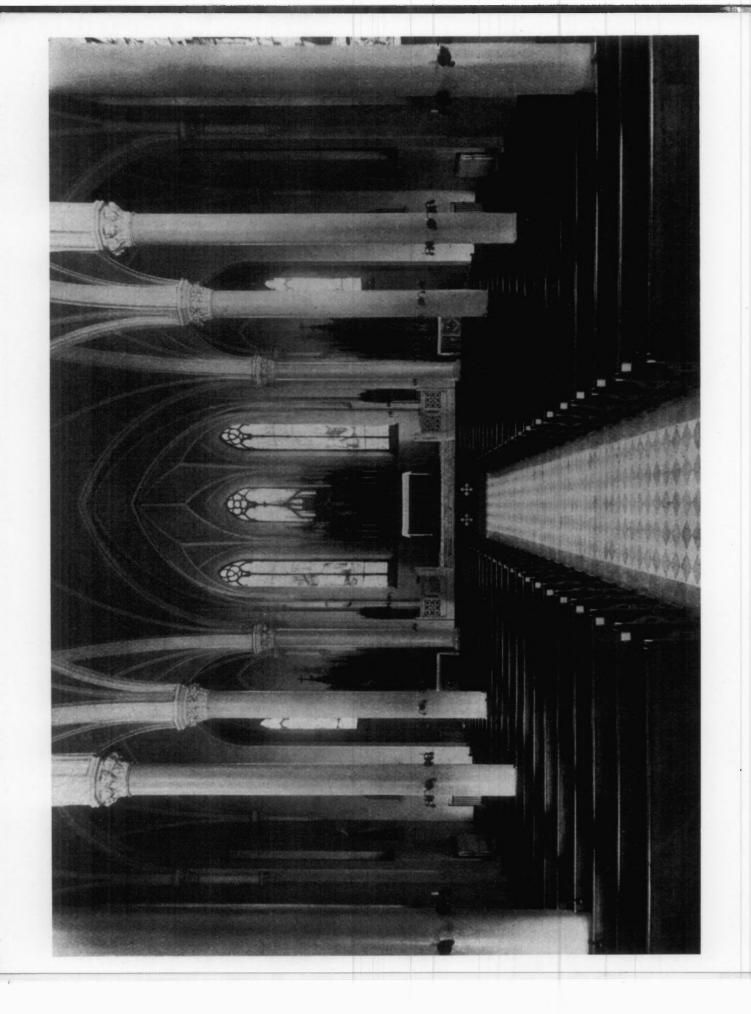


Photo #6 High Altar, in apse.
Photographer: Jill R. Johnson
Date: October, 1979
Negative: Landmarks Association

Camera facing west.



Photo #7 Blessed Mother Altar (South side

Photographer: Jill R. Johnson Date: October, 1979 Negative: Landmarks Association

Camera facing west.



Photo #8 Eastern (principal) and southern elevations of rectory, c. 1914.
From: Goldenes Jubilaum der hl.
Kreuz Gemeinde zu Baden (1914)
Photocopy: Silver Image, 1979
Negative: Landmarks Association

Camera facing southwest.

